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Director of Ohanyan Educational
Complex

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LANGUAGE POLICY

General description:

Document N	ОҮ/04-01
Approval date	
Last review date	
Developed by	
Responsible for implementation	

Amendments to the document

Date	Description of amendment	Full name, position, signature

1. INTRODUCTION

A. Aim

The principal aim of the Policy is to define the language philosophy, roles and responsibilities of community members in language development of the IB learner.

B. Dissemination

The Policy is open to employees, parents, students as well as other stakeholders. The accessibility of the document is ensured by publishing it on the official website.

C. Responsible for the implementation

The Language Coordinator is responsible for the implementation and fulfillment of the requirements of the Policy.

D. Revision

The document is reviewed at the beginning of each academic year to keep the points current and topical. The amendments are discussed with the staff members, as well as parent and student communities. The Pedagogical Council approves the amendments.

2. Language Philosophy

At Ohanyan Educational Complex we believe that all teachers can be regarded as language teachers and should promote the concept of communication in its variety of forms. Many students have two or three languages included in their language profile. We recognise these identities and promote a multicultural and multilingual learning environment, thus encouraging internationally minded individuals. Through opportunities to collaborate with others, students develop their communication skills, which we believe will strengthen them as communicators. The language of instruction is Armenian in the school, but two more languages (English and Russian) are offered as requirement, integrated in various curriculum areas. Some subjects are taught in English (Science and Mathematics with Singapore Math and Science books and curriculum) beginning from grade 1 to grade 6.

3. Language Rights, Roles and Responsibilities

All the members of the school community have a role to play in the development and maintenance of different languages.

The School Leadership

- Provides opportunities for staff professional development to ensure that the teachers can access the latest information on subject matters, as well as methodologies.
- Promotes a culture that values diversity and ensures that multicultural perspectives are incorporated into all aspects of school life.
- Ensures that all teachers are informed about teaching strategies for making the curriculum accessible for all students.

The Languages Coordinator

- Provides information which helps teachers to plan and implement school programs with multicultural perspectives and develop cross-cultural understandings with their students.
- Provides resource information for teachers in the areas of second language acquisition.
- Ensures teaching methodology, classroom organization, and selection of texts and resources for foreign language learners.
- Keeps abreast of the latest information in the language teaching through professional learning opportunities and shares this with staff as appropriate.
- Assists teachers to plan and implement an inclusive program.
- Consults with language teachers and language departments in the assessment of language skills and placement into the relevant language classes.
- Works in cooperation with the curriculum coordinators in the design and implementation of the curriculum in order to cater for the needs of language learning.
- Identifies language needs and implements intervention programs pertinent to the need of the student.

Homeroom and Subject teachers

- Considers the language learning needs of all students when planning activities across all areas of the curriculum.
- Supports students in learning through the use of foreign language(s) taught.
- Informs parents of student progress.
- Provides opportunities for all students to share the diversity of their experiences.
- Develops classroom activities that relate to and build upon the experiences that students bring to the learning situation.
- Ensures that multicultural perspectives are incorporated in all aspects of the classroom social and learning environments.

- Attends relevant professional learning opportunities (workshops, trainings, conferences) to support students' language development.

The Students

- Take every opportunity to learn and provides feedback on their learning.
- Show interest in learning and participates.
- Show respect for teachers and peers.
- Take ownership of their learning and seeks help when needed.
- Provide feedback and reflection on language learning process.
- Attend additional language classes if required by the Language Coordinator

The Family

- Communicates directly with the learning community regarding their child's language development.
- Complies with the additional costs required for additional support for their child's language support.
- Reads and returns forms and notifications from the coordinators and language teachers regarding their child's language learning.

4. Language and the Learner Profile

Communicators: We understand that communication is at the heart of education, that communication in more than one language is key to intercultural understanding. We help our students to become strong communicators.

Risk Takers: We recognize that language learning involves risk taking. We encourage our students to be independent, brave and articulate.

Thinkers: We believe in fostering critical thinking skills and creativity to help students use language to approach complex problems.

Reflective: We believe that reflection helps both students and teachers assess and understand the strengths and limitations of language use. Through reflection, language learning and personal development are considered.

5. The school provides support to students whose most proficient language is not the school's language(s) of instruction: advise to teachers

1. Use visual learning

For students who are struggling to process spoken language, visual learning can be extremely helpful. Use labelled images and videos to illustrate your lessons, so that when you introduce new concepts, everyone understands what you're referring to. Print these images out for students to stick into their books and refer back to. You could also label everyday items in the classroom, such as scissors, protractors, and other equipment.

Other ways to use visual learning are to write all instructions for the lesson on the board, and to use gestures and facial expressions to engage and aid your students. This has the additional advantage of benefitting students too – multiple modalities give everyone maximal opportunities to increase their understanding.

In addition, bringing realia into classroom can help students acquire the foreign language more effectively and easily.

2. Sit them near the front

So that your students can better hear and see during the lesson, sit them near the front of the classroom. You could also consider who they are sitting next to. A native English speaker with high ability (i.e. one who uses a wide vocabulary and complex sentence structures) will be a good language role model for those learning English.

Also consider the setting of the classroom. Ideally, students should not be sitting too far from the board, neither the teacher should be too far from the students and the distance to reach the board should be minimal.

It is best if the room setting permits the teacher to easily move desks and chairs so as to promote group and pair work during the lessons.

3. More group work

Group work increases students' engagement and gives them a chance to practice speaking in a less intimidating context. They may not be confident speaking out in front of the whole class, but might feel able to contribute to a small group discussion. Choose peers who are supportive and good language role-models to be in a group with students. This will also help to facilitate friendship, giving the students further opportunities to develop their language outside the classroom.

4. Adapt your teaching style

To enhance students' understanding of lessons, grade your language based on the general level of the students. Your language as a teacher is a model for students, therefore, it should be neither too difficult (in terms of pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar) nor too simple. When you ask a question, give pupils some time to think before you call on them.

5. Allow preparation before each lesson

If your students are given the learning materials in advance – for example, an article to read, a link to a video that you will be watching in class, or a list of key terms and phrases – it increases the likelihood that they will understand the lesson more effectively. Their confidence will also be boosted. Make sure that you remember to give them the materials a couple of days in advance.

6. Don't force them to talk

It is important to understand that language learners go through several stages on the path to fluency. They can often comprehend language – through listening and reading – before they can produce it themselves, through speaking and writing. Some teachers may see that a child is able to understand and try to make them speak; however, this puts on too much pressure. Accept that it is normal for students to go through a silent period, and let them speak when they feel confident to.

7. Learn about their name and their culture

Make an effort to get students' names right, and encourage your students to do so too. This shows them that you respect their language and identity, and helps them to feel accepted.

8. Understand that the child may act out

It can be tiring, frustrating, and sometimes embarrassing to feel that you are unable to communicate or understand what is going on in the classroom. As a result, students might display challenging behavior. By empathizing with the challenges they are facing, recognizing how well they are doing, and using effective techniques to deal with the behavior, you can encourage them to keep trying.

9. Signpost learners to resources

Your students may not be aware of all the resources that are available to them. As well as age-appropriate dictionaries and thesauruses. Make sure you train them how to become independent users of dictionaries and develop their use of safe and reliable research tools.

10. Communicate with home

If your students' parents understand what they are doing at school, it gives the students an advantage. Ensure that you are communicating effectively with home by making letters clear and accessible. This means using short sentences, no jargon, and translating them into the parents' first language if necessary. Encourage them to come to parents' evenings, and provide a translator if you need to.

6. References

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